

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4325
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 3665

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS/ PFOR SREF CVIS CA VN VS
SUBJECT: CANADIAN IMMIGRATION TALKS WITH SRV OFFICIALS

REF: (A) 76 HONG KONG 13646, (B) STATE 68806 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: DURING A RECENT VISIT THE NEWLY ACCREDITED
CANADIAN AMBASSADOR TO HANOI DISCUSSED FAMILY REUNIFIC-
ATION AND IMMIGRATION PROBLEMS WITH VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS.
THE VIETNAMESE AGREED, FOR THE PRESENT, TO LET ONLY
ELDERLY PERSONS DEPART, BUT SAID THEY WOULD CONSIDER
OTHERS AT A LATER DATE. CANADIANS INTEND TO PRESENT
A DETAILED DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO SRV ON THE SUBJECT AND
FOLLOW UP WITH A VISIT BY IMMIGRATION OFFICERS.
PRECEDENTS ESTABLISHED WITH THE CANADIAN WILL MOST
LIKELY APPLY WHEN USG ATTEMPTS TO TACKLE THE SAME
PROBLEMS. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED TO
CONGENOFF BY IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS OF THE CANADIAN
COMMISSION IN HONG KONG. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING LATE FEBRUARY-EARLY MARCH, CANADA'S NEW
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AMBASSADOR TO THE SRV AUTHUR R. MENZIES (RESIDENT
IN PEKING) PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS AND TOOK
ADVANTAGE OF THE OCCASION TO BRING UP THE QUESTION
OF PERMITTING VIETNAMESE WITH RELATIVES IN CANADA
TO IMMIGRATE. MENZIES MET WITH DEPTUY FONMIN PHAN
HIEN AND THE SRV FONMIN OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR
CONSULAR AFFAIRS. BOTH OFFICIALS SEEMED WILLING

TO DISUCSS THE SUBJECT IN DETAIL. A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN POLICY WHICH THE CANADIANS NOTED WAS THAT THE VIETNAMESE SAID THEY WOULD HENCEFORTH DISCUSS AND DECIDE SUCH MATTERS IN HANOI AND NOT IN SAIGON, AS HAD BEEN DONE IN THE VISIT OF THE CANADIAN OFFICIAL IN NOVEMBER 1976 (SEE REFTEL A). PHAN HIEN SAID THAT FOR "HUMANITARIAN REASONS" ELDERLY PARENTS WOULD BE CONSIDERED IMMEDIATELY FOR IMMIGRATION TO CANADA. HOWEVER, FOR "OTHER CASES" TRAVELLING TO OR FROM VIETNAM FOR EITHER EMIGRATION OR VISITING, SOME TIME WOULD HAVE TO PASS TO PERMIT THE "HEALING OF WOUNDS". HIEN NOTED THAT A LOVE FOR THE FATHERLAND WOULD DEVELOP AS THE YEARS PASSED AND THE WAR WAS LEFT BEHIND.

2. MENZIES RAISED THE TECHNICAL PROBLEM OF MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS, TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AND AIRLINE TICKETS WITH THE FONMIN OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSULAR AFFAIRS. COMMENTING ON A CANADIAN PROPOSAL TO SEND IN X-RAY FILM AND MEDICAL DOCTORS, THE MINISTRY OFFICIAL REPLIED THAT MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS COULD BE ARRANGED IN THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT PAID FOR THEM. THE ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS MIGHT ALSO BE POSSIBLE. SPONSORS IN CANADA WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PAY FOR AIRLINE TICKETS. DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE CANADIAN SPONSOR WOULD BE REQUIRED INCLUDING RELATIONSHIP; TIMES AND PLACES OF SPONSOR'S RESIDENCE IN VIETNAM; SPONSOR'S FORMER POSITION IN VIETNAM; REASONS, DATES AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF CONFIDENTIAL

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SPONSOR'S DEPARTURE FROM VIETNAM; AND SPONSOR'S PRESENT OCCUPATION. PROCESSING WOULD BE DONE THROUGH THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN HANOI OR THE CANADIAN AND VIETNAMESE EMBASSY IN PEKING, BUT NOT THROUGH THE VIETNAMESE EMBASSY IN OTTAWA.

3. CANADIAN IMMIGRATION OFFICERS NOTED TO CONGENOFF THAT GOC WOULD HAVE SPONSOR PASS REQUIRED INFORMATION TO SRV DIRECTLY AND NOT THROUGH GOC OFFICIALS. THEY OBSERVED THAT DESPITE SRV AGREEMENT ONLY ON ELDERLY PERSONS, OTHER CATERGORIES WERE PRESENTLY DEPARTING VIETNAM FOR OTHER COUNTRIES AND THEY WERE HOPEFUL THAT SIMILAR EXCEPTIONS WOULD BE MADE FOR PERSONS GOING TO CANADA. A DRAFT DIPLOMATIC NOTE, PRESENTING IN DETAIL CANADIAN IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES, HAS BEEN SENT BY THE CANADIAN COMMISSION IN HONG KONG FOR OTTAWA'S CONSIDERATION. IF THE NOTE IS APPROVED, IT WILL BE PRESENTED IN HANOI AND FOLLOWED UP BY A VISIT OF CANADIAN IMMIGRATION

OFFICERS POSSIBLY IN MAY OR JUNE. TWO CANADIAN
IMMIGRATION OFFICERS IN HONG KONG ARE NOW ACCREDITED
TO HANOI.

4. COMMENT: JUDGING FROM THE VIETNAMESE COMMENTS
ON MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND AIRLINES TICKETS, THE
SRV SEES THE CANADIAN IMMIGRATION PLAN AS A POSSIBLE
MEANS OF RIDDING THEMSELVES OF NON-PRODUCTIVE
CITIZENS AND GAINING HARD CURRENCY. REQUEST FOR
DETAILED INFORMATION ON SPONSORS WILL PLACE PRESSURE
ON SOME PARTS OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY IN
CANADA TO STAY IN LINE AND NOT CONDUCT ANTI-SRV
ACTIVITIES. THE USG WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CONFRONTED
WITH SIMILAR DEMANDS WHEN THESE PROBLEMS ARE
RAISED DURING NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SRV. THE TONE
OF PHAN HIEN'S REMARKS TO AMBASSADOR MENZIES SOUNDS
FAR LESS FORTHCOMING THAN THE PROMISE TO BE
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"GENEROUS" MADE TO THE WOODCOCK COMMISSION (NOTED
IN REFTEL B). IT IS POSSIBLE THAT PHAN HIEN WANTED
TO BEGIN ON A CONSERVATIVE LEVEL WITH THE CANADIANS,
GIVEN THE VIETNAMESE TRACK RECORD, HOWEVER, IT IS
MORE LIKELY THAT HE WANTED TO SOUND MORE POSITIVE
WITH THE AMERICAN GROUP THAN HE REALLY INTENDS
TO BE.
CROSS

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